

# CHURCH NEWS

FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES

Edited by

THE NORTHERN ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE

Sigtuna, Sweden

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No. 34

January 28th, 1958.

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## DENMARK

### The Evangelical Church and the European Joint Market.

In various quarters in Denmark as well as in other countries the plans for close economic co-operation in Europe in the form of a joint market have given rise to some misgivings on the grounds that the cultural and religious individualities of the various countries may be endangered. It has especially been pointed out that there would be a "Catholic predominance" which might become a menace to the evangelical churches.

In a New Year's statement to "Kristeligt Dagblad" the primate of the Lutheran National Church Bishop H. Fuglsang-Damgaard, Copenhagen, gives his views on the question:

I have seen that some anxiety is felt as to the great Catholic influence that will presumably exist within the joint market. But why only speak of the negative aspects of this? A closer relationship with central and southern Europe may also have its good sides. It may for instance lead to a deeper realisation of our Lutheran heritage. Where Protestant and Catholic views of Christianity stand side by side it often leads both groups to a more lively realisation of the value of their faith. It is, however, probable that a European joint market would also strengthen our connection with the Lutheran churches in it, and this might be of value for them as well as for us. That which is of eternal value in the evangelical churches will always continue to exist. We need not live in constant anxiety as to the fate of Protestantism. The Reformation was God's doing, God had His purpose with the Reformation. The attraction exerted by each of the two large churches changes, but that which was brought into the world through the Reformation - the bright day of the Gospel - cannot perish. These eternal values, which we may for instance find expressed in Luther's prologue to the Epistle to the Romans, will continue to exist.

### 3-5 New Churches a Year with State Subsidies.

The Danish Government's economic committee has adopted new guiding principles for the granting of subsidies and building materials for the erection of new churches to be used by the Lutheran





National Church. The Government has promised to make 1 million Danish crowns a year available for 5 years for the erection of churches, and it is left to the Ministry of Church Affairs to divide this sum between the various projects, though with the condition that the subsidy may not exceed 50% of the building expenses. According to law at least 25% must be raised by subscription, and the remainder of the necessary sum can be taken up as a loan.

If the 50%-rule is acted upon it will be possible to build 3-4 churches of standard size a year, but if a subsidy of only 33% is given it should be possible to build 5 new churches a year, and it seems most likely that the Ministry of Church Affairs will prefer the lower rate of subsidy so as to make it possible to erect a larger number of churches.

At the same time general permission was given to erect "church cores", which form part of a larger building project, as soon as half the cost of the church core has been collected. Finally it was decided that in future, building materials will be granted to all church building projects that are financed without State subsidies.

The new decisions have been hailed with much joy in church circles. In a leading article under the heading "A Great Day for Our National Church" the Kristeligt Dagblad voices a vote of thanks to the Minister of Church Affairs, Mrs. Bodil Koch, for her energetic and able handling of the matter and calls for co-operation in building the new churches.

It has been calculated that in the suburban boroughs of Copenhagen alone, where the population has increased rapidly in the last years, 10-15 new churches are to be built within the next 5 years, and the Copenhagen Church Fund, which organizes the work of building new churches in the capital, is now busily engaged in planning the new building projects.

#### The Adventists Build 10 Churches in 7 Years.

Last month the Danish Adventist Society dedicated a new church at Naerum north of Copenhagen. This means that this society, which only has some 4,000 members, has built no less than 10 churches in the last 7 years. The Danish State does not subsidise church buildings in religious societies outside the Lutheran National Church.

#### One Seat in Church for Every 30 Inhabitants.

The Statistical Office in Copenhagen has produced some interesting statistics based on questions put to all the clergymen in Copenhagen and its suburban boroughs with the purpose of throwing light on certain aspects of religious life within the Lutheran National Church in the capital.

The statistics show that in the three metropolitan boroughs, Copenhagen, Frederiksberg, and Gentofte, there are 104 churches with in all 55,709 seats or one seat for every 17 inhabitants, whereas in the 19 suburban boroughs, which have developed rapidly in the last years, there are 48 churches and chapels with 10,838 seats or one seat for every 30 inhabitants. In the three municipal boroughs there are 244 pastors or one for every 3,900 inhabitants, and in the suburban boroughs 74 pastors, which is one for every 4,400 inhabitants.

National Church. The Government has promised to make 1 million Danish crowns a year available for the erection of churches, and it is left to the Ministry of Church Affairs to distribute this sum between the various parishes. It is not possible to say that the Government has any intention of making a special provision for the erection of new churches. According to the present law, the Government may, if it so wishes, make a special provision for the erection of new churches, but it is not bound to do so.

If the 504-voice choir is to be maintained, it will be necessary to build 5-6 churches at intervals of 1 year, but at a cost of only 100,000 kroner. It is given it should be possible to build 5 new churches a year, and it seems most likely that the Ministry of Church Affairs will give the Government the right to do so. It is not possible to say that the Government has any intention of making a special provision for the erection of new churches, but it is not bound to do so.

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The statistics also show that in 1956 1.252 children were named without baptism in the municipal area, corresponding to 7.3% of the number of baptisms. In the same year 1.104 people, mostly men, withdrew from the National Church, whereas 116 were received into it, not counting those received through baptism.

The statistics do not deal with the number of members belonging to the Free Churches or their work in the capital.

#### Not Earlier Amusements on Sundays.

The Minister of Justice Mr. Hans Haekkerup has stated that the Danish Government does not intend to reintroduce the Bill regarding the observance of the Lord's Day which was not enacted after its introduction in 1954. The Bill proposed that amusements such as the cinemas, theatres, and horse races be permitted to open at 2 o'clock on Sundays instead of at 4 o'clock as is now the case. - In church circles the Minister's statement has been welcomed.

#### The Interdenominational Weeks of Prayer.

For many years the Evangelical Alliance's week of prayer in the first week of the new year has found wide support in Denmark. As in former years interdenominational communion services were held this year in several places, i.a. in Copenhagen, as an introduction to the week of prayer.

The ecumenical week of prayer 18th-25th January is fast becoming an established institution beside the former. As part of the week of prayer Denmark's Ecumenical Council was arranging an ecumenical evening on January 19th in co-operation with the other denominations taking part. The main speech was given by the Secretary General Rev. Westergaard Madsen. In connection with the week of prayer the Danish branch of the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius has arranged a so-called "church pilgrimage" on January 21st under the leadership of Rev. Svend Borregård. The participants were to assemble in St. Paul's Church, which belongs to the Lutheran National Church, and then to visit a Methodist, an Orthodox, a Roman Catholic, and an Anglican church, and the pilgrimage ended at the Swedish Lutheran church. In each church a short service of prayer was held by the minister of the church in question, and finally representatives of three non-Lutheran denominations spoke on the main theme from the Lutheran World Conference in Minneapolis "Christ Liberates and Unites".

### FINLAND

#### Lively Discussion on the Relations Between the National Church and the State.

The relations between the Lutheran National Church and the State have been brought up for discussion in Finland as in the other Northern countries in the last few years. Shortly before Christmas the Finnish and the Swedish student papers arranged a debate on the subject in Helsinki (Helsingfors). The debate was opened by 4 speakers, and afterwards no fewer than 27 people spoke,





so that it was decided to take the question up for renewed discussion at a later meeting.

The first speaker Mr. Vainö Voipio advocated the separation of the State and the National Church. Among other things he maintained that the Church used social forces to safeguard its position, and he thought it unjustifiable that the National Church taxes all its members, including those to whom their faith is not a living reality. Dean Erkki Niinivaara pointed out that the Church also represents a life other than that beyond the grave; the Church and State move in the same sphere of life and for this reason they must maintain some mutual relationship. Mr. Toivo Rasku believed that the Church's power was wholly due to the Church's power of taxation, and Mr. Arvo Haapanen then gave an objective account of the Church's economy. From this it appeared that the Church's expenses in 1956 had amounted to 480.000 Finnish marks more than its income, and that the total income through church taxes had amounted to 5.141 million Finnish marks, chargeable in the same ratio as the local taxes to persons belonging to the National Church, and to all institutions and firms with the exception of those in which over half the shareholders belong to the Greek Orthodox Church.

The daily paper "Hufvudstadsbladet" wrote in an article on the debate that the main tendency of the speeches seemed to show that a certain reform of the relationship between Church and State was necessary, but that a complete separation would not benefit either side.

#### Next Lutheran World Conference to Be Held in Finland?

As mentioned in the last number of CN the Finnish Church has invited the Lutheran World Federation to hold its next General Assembly in Finland. The Secretary General of the World Federation Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist and the leader of its relief work Rev. Bengt Hoffman have now paid a visit to Finland and negotiated with representatives of the Finnish Church about the matter, and it is hoped in Finland that the leaders of the World Federation will accept the Finnish invitation.

#### "Finland's Independence a Gift of God to Finland's People."

On the 40th anniversary of Finland's independence the Christian newspaper "Kotimaa" published an editorial from which the following excerpt is taken:

"The fact that Finland became independent is not only a proof of a certain political ability and judgement, but above all a proof of the secret way in which God guides the fate of the nations. After the first World War the way to independent national life was opened to many other oppressed peoples, but Finland is the only one of the republics formed in this way that still has the sovereign right to decide its own affairs. Its independence is God's special gift to the Finnish people."

#### Clergymen to Receive Better Training in Social Ethics.

The Finnish Bishops' Conference which was held in Helsinki (Helsingfors) last month decided to improve the training in social ethics given to intending clergymen in the National Church. A committee was appointed consisting of the bishops G.O. Rosenqvist and Martti Simo-







joki to work out a more detailed suggestion in connection with the reorganization of the theological training.

#### 75.000 Greek Orthodox Christians in Finland.

There are about 75.000 Greek Orthodox Christians in Finland divided into 14 congregations in the diocese of Kuopio and 11 congregations in the diocese of Helsinki (Helsingfors), was stated by Bishop Alexander to the "Åbo Underrättelser". A large number of the Greek Orthodox Church's members, who formerly lived together in Karelia, have now been dispersed over the entire country and it has therefore been necessary to build many new churches and chapels in the years since the War. It has been possible to carry out the traditional Orthodox ornamentation of the new churches as some Orthodox artists have devoted themselves to this task and Lutheran artists have also made their contribution, says the Bishop, who also expresses his gratitude for the financial aid given by the poverty-stricken Finnish State to the sorely tried Orthodox Church.

#### Finland's Women Organizations Advocate the Ordination of Women.

The Finnish women organizations have now publicly declared themselves to be in favour of admitting women to clerical office on an equal footing with men, and it has been resolved that the individual organizations attempt to create a strong public opinion in the matter. The resolution was passed at a board meeting last month of the Central Federation of Finland's Women Organizations.

At the meeting the woman theologian Lyyli Tikka opened a debate on the question of women pastors. She explained the proposal to create special posts for women theologians in the Finnish National Church which was put forward by a committee appointed by the last church synod and is to be discussed at the church synod this year (see CN No. 27). According to this proposal the women theologians who serve at hospitals or in prisons can by the Chapter be given the right to administer communion to persons who are unable to take part in the congregation's communion service. Lyyli Tikka pointed out the unsatisfactory aspects of this proposal and stated that another proposal has been put forward giving women unlimited access to clerical office.

#### About 5.000 More Children of Divorced Parents in One Year.

The problem of divorces and children of divorced parents also concerns the Finnish Church. This is one of the reasons for the extensive marriage counselling the Church has undertaken to give.

It appears from Statistical Surveys that in 1956 as many as 4.797 children were involved in a total of 3.674 dissolved marriages. Most of the divorces took place in families with one child, and 1.172 of the dissolved marriages were childless, but in 49 cases there were more than 6 children in the dissolved marriages. It is worth noting that while the most critical period still is between the 5th and 10th years of marriage, no less than 41.8% of the marriages dissolved in 1956 were more than 10 years old. The corresponding figure for the years 1951-1955 was on an average 37.5%.



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75,000 Greek Orthodox Christians in Finland

There are about 75,000 Greek Orthodox Christians in Finland, of which 14 congregations in the diocese of Helsinki and 11 in the diocese of Tampere. The number of the Greek Orthodox in the diocese of Helsinki (Helsinki) was stated by the bishop of the diocese, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, to be 75,000. The members, who formerly lived together in Helsinki, have now been dispersed over the entire country, and it has therefore been necessary to build many new churches and chapels in the years since the war. It has been possible to carry out the traditional Orthodox veneration of the new churches, as some Greek Orthodox priests have devoted themselves to this task and others have been asked to do so. The bishop, who also expresses his gratitude for the financial aid given by the government, wishes Finnish States to the Greek Orthodox Church.

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At the meeting the women theologians of the Finnish Church on the question of women pastors. The resolution was proposed to create special posts for women theologians in the Finnish National Church which was put forward by a committee appointed by the last church assembly which is to be discussed at the church assembly this year. The No. 27. According to this proposal the women theologians who have at present no clerical offices can by the church be given the right to administer communion to persons who are unable to take part in the congregation's communion service. The resolution also states that satisfactory aspects of this proposal and other matters which are of importance have been put forward giving women qualified access to clerical offices.

About 2,000 More Children of Divorced Parents in One Year

The profiles of divorcees and children of divorced parents also concern the Finnish Church. This is one of the reasons why the Finnish marriage counseling the Church has undertaken to give. It appears from statistical surveys that in 1955 as many as 1,197 children were involved in a total of 5,394 dissolved marriages. Most of the divorces took place in families with one child, and 1,197 of the dissolved marriages were children, but in 49 cases there were more than 6 children in the dissolved marriages. It is worth noting that while the most critical period still is between the 5th and 10th years of marriage, no less than 1/3 of the marriages dissolved in 1955 were more than 10 years old. The corresponding figure for the years 1951-1952 was on an average 37.5%.



### Santa Claus Came From the South - By Aeroplane.

This year Santa Claus came to Finland from the South! Non-commissioned officers stationed at the American air-base 604 at Ramstein, Western Germany, were responsible for "Operation Sleigh-bells". Under the leadership of sergeant Hans Naumann they had made and bought Christmas gifts for an outlying Finnish children's home Riutala at Inari (Enare), which is owned by the YWCA. The gifts were flown to Helsinki (Helsingfors) by a U.S. Air Force plane and presented at a little ceremony at the YWCA's office in Helsinki (Helsingfors) where the Secretary General Sylvi Visapää made a speech of thanks. The gifts were sent on by the Finnish air-line's aeroplane to Ivalo so as to reach the children's home in time. The American non-commissioned officers have promised to return to Finland this spring so as to visit the children at Riutala, and on this occasion they will be presented with a "spring gift" by the Finns.

### NORWAY

#### The "Inner Mission" Opposes the Idea of an "Episcopal Church".

At a staff meeting of the Norwegian "Inner Mission" in December Rev. Fredrik Wisløff, who is chairman of the "Inner Mission Society", strongly repudiated certain aspects of the development within the Norwegian Lutheran National Church. The development is unperceptibly tending towards a church governed by the bishops, he said, and this development reached its climax when the college of bishops practically co-opted a new member. (Rev. Wisløff was referring to the fact that a majority of the bishops had recommended to the Ministry of Church Affairs that Secretary General Kåre Støylen be appointed as the new bishop of Agder, and that the Ministry followed this recommendation although the "Inner Mission" candidate Rev. H.E. Wisløff had received far more votes in the election.) But this decision made everything collapse like a house of cards, continued the speaker, and nobody has lost more through that which happened than the bishops themselves. It will not be easy to recover what has been lost. He characterized the bishops' recommendation as a deathblow to church democracy.

Pastor Wisløff spoke of the efforts that have been made in part of the daily press to oppose the election of "orthodox" Christians at the elections of vestries held last autumn and warned against making the vestries spiritual work-centres. This should not be done in a State Church, the organization of which is founded on the civil right to vote. Christian activity in the congregations must be free and independent and centred in the flock of believers.

Pastor Wisløff went on to say that the "Inner Mission" sincerely desires peace to work within the church, but that this is only possible if one adheres to the "Inner Mission's" old principle that Christians who are loyal to the Bible and the Confession can co-operate with liberal pastors and bishops in purely official matters, but not in volutnary and spiritual matters, and that the right to adhere to this principle be recognized by all.





### Facing a Breach between Church and State.

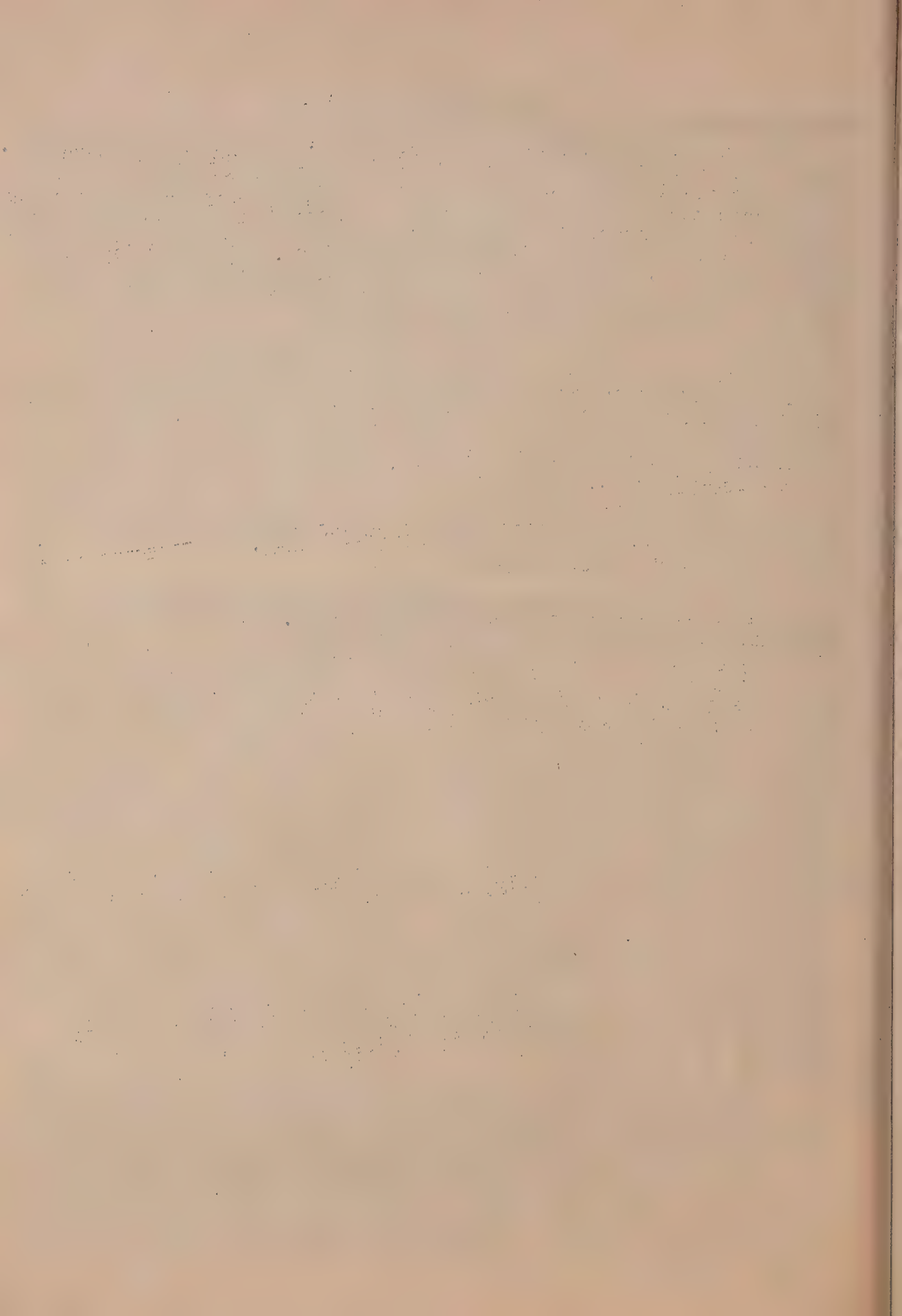
In a New Year's interview Bishop Ragnvald Indrebø, Bergen, discussed the demands for tolerance in the National Church that have been expressed in many quarters, i.e. in connection with the voluntary church meeting last autumn where the church's character of being a confessional church was emphasized. He feels that the problems and differences between the people and the church go far deeper than most people realize. A large portion of the Norwegian people does not understand that actively professing Christians must hold fast to the idea of a confessional church, but to them the most important thing is that the church be broad and tolerant.

If the State should advocate that the church be a tolerant church the situation would become more than serious. There are signs indicating such a position, and this may lead to difficult times for the confessional church. If the development continues as heretofore, the Bishop feels that we are moving towards a separation between the National Church and the State. It is not easy to foretell from which side the breach will come, he continues, but the situation seems to become increasingly difficult as the State wishes to apply ordinary principles of tolerance to conditions in a Church which must at all costs hold fast to the Confession.

### Norwegian Refusal to Consider Integration between World Council of Churches and International Missionary Council.

Shortly before the meeting of the International Missionary Council in Ghana the Secretary General Tormod Vågen wrote an article in the paper "Udsyn" where he stated in detail the reasons for the refusal to consider an integration between the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches as advocated by a large majority in the Norwegian Missionary Council. First of all he voices the fear that fundamental biblical truths will find no room within the World Council of Churches where "liberal theologians and Greek Orthodox prelates stand side by side with Lutheran and Reformed church leaders". Secondly, he expressed the fear that if the International Missionary Council be merged with the World Council of Churches this may mean "a concentration of power that can exert a dangerous influence on the local churches and missionary councils". In spite of repeated assurances from the leaders of the World Council of Churches to the effect that they do not wish to create a super church, Mr. Vågen feels that nevertheless the organization will finally become a church. Finally, as a third reason is named the fear of splitting local Christian communities as a result of a possible merging of the International Missionary Council with the World Council of Churches.

The new Secretary General of the Norwegian Missionary Society Frederik Birkeli, who was until recently director of the Lutheran World Federation's Department on World Mission, has also rejected the plans for merging the two organizations. In an interview given to the Christian daily "Dagen" in Bergen he states as his reason that the International Missionary Council is so organized that it promotes decentralization, which he considers very important, and that the Missionary Council can find entry among missions and churches where the World Council of Churches is powerless to-day. The two





organizations serve the cause of the church best when they are separate, and furthermore the temptation to power becomes greater the larger a world organization becomes.

At the same time Mr. Birkeli rejects the view that the World Council of Churches has become more liberal in its theology. On the contrary, he maintains that it has been increasingly tending in the opposite direction of late. The idea that the World Council of Churches with its present composition could become a world church is rejected by Secretary General Birkeli as an impossibility, and he adds: "We must not conjure up ghosts, but be fair to the World Council of Churches".

#### All the Burnt Churches in the Finmark Rebuilt in 3-4 Years.

Last month the new church at Molde was dedicated at a special service at which Bishop Arne Fjellbu preached. This means that still another of the many churches which were burnt in connection with the fighting in the Finmark (Northern Norway) during the War has been rebuilt. According to a statement by the Assistant Secretary to the Minister of Church Affairs Mr. Jahr issued in connection with the dedication of the church at Molde, one third of the ruined churches have now been restored. It is anticipated that in the course of 3-4 years the remaining churches can be completed.

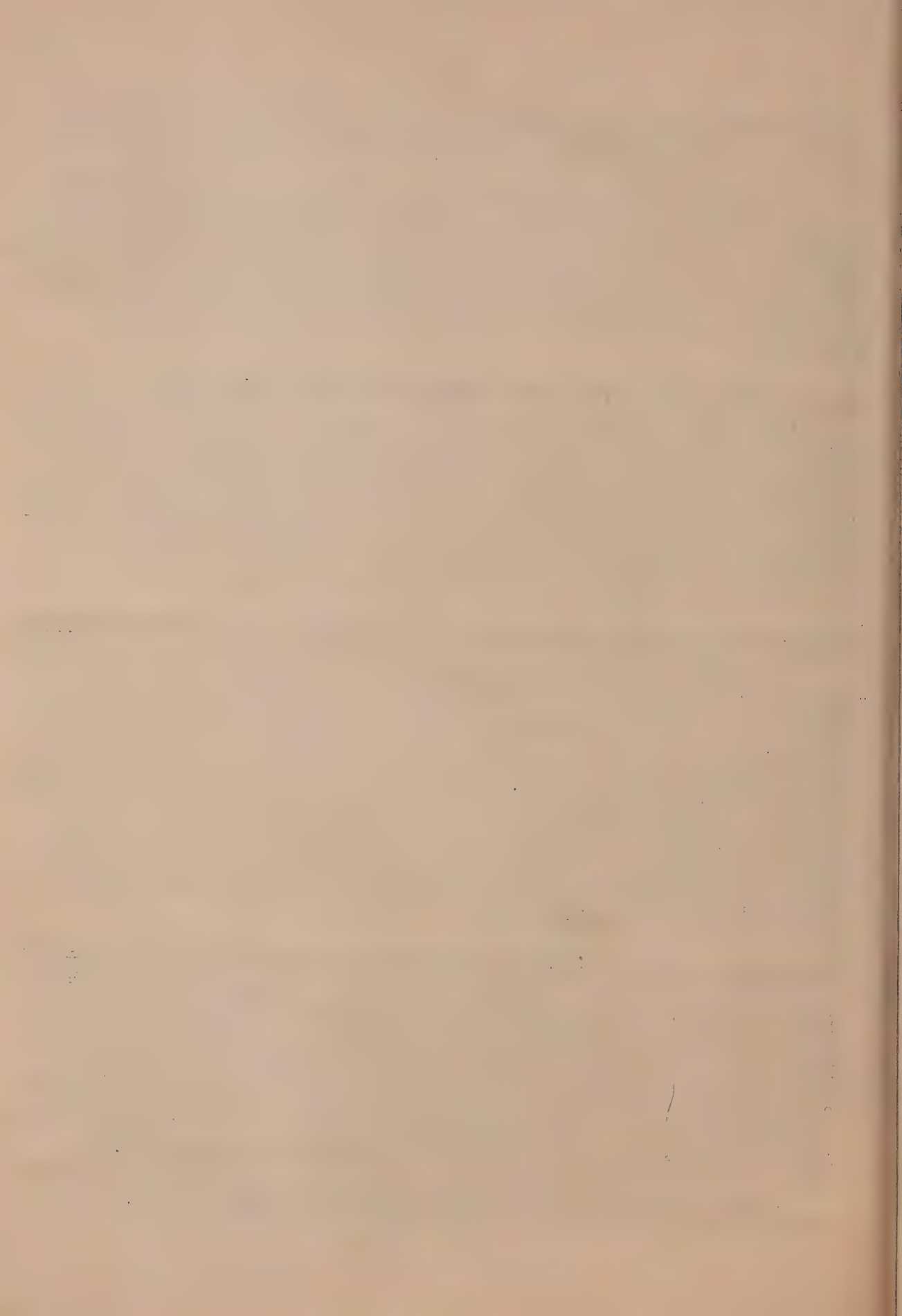
#### "Elementary Christian Teaching for Grown-Ups" in the Norwegian Radio.

Secretary Sigurd Lynde, who is responsible for the religious programmes on the Norwegian radio, informs the Christian daily in Oslo "Vårt Land" that in the near future a new series of broadcasts is to begin with the title "Elementary Christian Teaching for Grown-Ups". The idea is to take up Luther's little catechism as well as other things taught in the religious education given in schools and as a preparation for confirmation. The two broadcast series "Tones of the Revival" and "The Church and Our Time" are to continue, and as something new special Scripture-reading prayer services will be held every Saturday. Some one man will be responsible for choosing the Scripture-readings and the hymns every month, and the first will be Bishop Johs. Smemo, Oslo. This is the first time a prayer service is being held in Norway without a sermon or a talk.

#### Old Magazine for Clergymen Ceases Publication - New Magazine Appears.

From the New Year "Norsk Kirkeblad", a magazine for clergymen which began to appear 53 years ago, has ceased publication, and at the same time a new magazine for clergymen is being started by the publishing house "Land og Kirke" with the manager Øivind Berggrav (a son of the Bishop) as editor. The new paper does not intend to continue the traditions or points of view of "Norsk Kirkeblad", and - according to the editor - it does not wish to represent any one point of view but to give room for discussions of theological matters and to serve the double purpose: information and inspiration.

There already exists another magazine for clergymen "Luthersk Kirketidende" which represents a conservative point of view.





## SWEDEN

### Bill Regarding Women Clergymen to be Introduced this Month.

On January 15th the Swedish Government has introduced a Bill in Parliament regarding the authorization of women to hold office in the Swedish Lutheran National Church. The only difference between this Bill and the one rejected by the Church Synod last autumn is that it is proposed that the present Bill be put in force from January 1st, 1959, instead of July 1st, 1958.

If the Bill is passed by Parliament during its spring session a new Church Synod will be held in the autumn to deliberate on the Bill, as no law regarding church matters can be enacted without the sanction of the Church Synod.

A number of newspapers and church papers have deplored the fact that the Government has ignored the wish expressed by the Church Synod and the Bishops' Conference last November (see CN No. 33) that they be granted a reasonable period of time so that wider agreement might be reached within the church regarding the question. As a matter of fact, the statement issued by the Bishops' Conference was welcomed in many quarters. The church weekly "Svensk Kyrkotidning" characterizes it as a step forward towards a solution of the problem. It especially stresses the fact that the bishops completely reject the idea that women should be barred from holding office "on grounds of worthiness", and that they state that when the Word of God is applied to present-day conditions the very real change which has taken place regarding the social position of women must be taken into consideration. In reality the statement issued by the Bishops' Conference is of far-reaching importance, writes the editor Dr. Ruben Josefson,

The Bishops' Conference has also applied to the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches for information regarding the position held by various churches in this delicate question, and the bishops have likewise requested various organizations to co-operate in a deeper study of the problem.

Bishop Bo Giertz, Göteborg, has warned against authorizing women to hold office and has predicted that if the Church Synod should approve the Bill many people will leave the Lutheran National Church and join the Catholic Church.

### Lay Women Authorized to Become Assistant Preachers.

The Swedish Parliament has in connection with the discussion on the benefice reform (see CN No. 28) passed a resolution to the effect that women are to have the same right as men to become assistant preachers at churches where, as a result of the regulation of benefices, it would otherwise be difficult to hold services. The regulation involves a joining together of parishes with only a few inhabitants, and in sparsely populated regions this may mean the rector cannot hold regular services in all the churches in the parish. If there are no ordained persons in the neighbourhood who can step in as assistant preachers the bishops will have the right to give laymen special permission to serve in this capacity, and according to the Bill now passed by Parliament the same permission may be given to women. - The regulation of benefice is to be carried out not earlier than January 1st, 1961.





### Higher Standard of Future Clergymen in the Free Churches.

An interesting analysis has recently been made of the theological training given by the five large Swedish Free Churches, viz. the Mission Covenant Church, the Baptist Union, the Methodist Church, Örebro Missionary Society, and the Alliance Mission. From this it appears that the educational grounding of students preparing themselves to become clergymen or missionaries is clearly better than it was earlier. Most of the students already have a school-leaving certificate from a Gymnasium or Middle School or some other form of higher education. At the Methodist Church's seminary this is even a condition for entrance. The total number of students at the 5 schools was 194, 130 of whom wished to become clergymen while 64 wanted to be missionaries. There is no noticeable increase in the number of students seeking admittance. In all the seminaries there are among the students women who are preparing to take holy orders, 9 in all, whereas 33 women are preparing to take up work on the mission fields. The Swedish Free Churches have at present about 10 women serving in holy orders.

### Most Swedish Doctors Want More Rigorous Abortion Laws.

The majority of doctors have long desired more rigorous abortion laws, claims a large article published by two Swedish doctors Per Arén and Curt Åmark last month in "Svensk Läkartidning". The article presents the results of an investigation of the 234 cases in which women in Stockholm and its neighbourhood during the years 1950-1952 were granted a legal abortion without making use of it. In no less than 89% of the cases the two doctors find that the women have come to no harm whatever through giving birth to the child they might have had removed as a fetus, and in only 11% of the cases did the doctors find that the granting of a legal abortion had been justified. On the basis of this investigation the doctors declare that greater rigour is needed in the law's provisions as to when abortion is indicated, but at the same time they feel that really effective help should be given the women who apply for abortion without having it granted.

### 270 Children from Berlin Visit Swedish Homes for 3 Months.

At present some 270 children from Berlin are paying a 3-months visit to Swedish homes by invitation from the Mission Covenant Church and the Baptist Union. They are mostly refugee children.

### New Work Taken Up by Stockholm City-Church.

The Klara Church in the centre of Stockholm is the parish church for only about 4.000 people, but on the other hand not less than 100.000 people work there daily in the shops and offices in the parish. This fact has set new tasks before the church and its pastors. Besides carrying out the normal parish work an attempt is being made to get into contact with the business-concerns in the parish so as to make the church an "everyday church".

On all week-days short prayer services are held, Monday and Thursday noons there are prayers and organ concerts following the pattern of the well-known "lunch hour services" in London's City







churches, and furthermore the churches are open all day for private prayers, and the pastors are available for personal conferences during certain hours.

Several large institutions in the parish now and then hold services in the church for their employees.

#### Scandinavian-German Conference on the Christian Conception of History.

The Scandinavian-German Church Convention will arrange a conference from February 6th-10th at Lejonadal near Stockholm. The conference will deal with the Christian conception of history. Bishop Di-  
belius, Berlin, is one of the speakers and he will speak on the theme: "Europe - a common responsibility for the evangelical churches?" Among the participants are the Bishops Krummacher and Noth with five other church leaders from East Germany. From Berlin Präses Scharf and the Deans Grüber and Böhm will take part in the conference. The churches of West Germany will be represented by the Bishops Dietzfelbinger, Halfmann, Haug, Hertrich and Lilje, Präses Wilm and Präses Beckmann, Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein von Hassel, President von Thadden, Trieglaff and others. From the Scandinavian churches come among others Archbishop Salomies and Professor Nikolainen, Finland, Bishop Høgsbro, Professor Sjøe and Dr. Holt, Denmark, Bishop Smemo, Professor Reidar Hauge, Dr. Bonnevie-Svendsen and Rev. Henrik Hauge from Norway, and the Bishops Björkquist, Cullberg and Nygren, Pastor Primarius Nystedt, Dr. Harry Johansson and Rev. Olov Hartman, Sweden.

#### News in Brief.

- The Mission Covenant Church of Sweden has lost two of its most prominent figures through the deaths of Dr. Ivar Wennfors and Mr. Gustav Nyström. Ivar Wennfors was a teacher at the Theological Seminary belonging to the Mission Covenant Church and for a number of years he served as chairman of the National Council of Pastors. Gustav Nyström was a missionary in China until 1949. He served as interpreter in the neutral repatriation commission in Korea 1953-1954 and was interpreter for Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld during the latter's visit to China in 1955.

- At its meeting last month the Swedish Section of the Lutheran World Federation elected a new board. Bishop Elis Malmeström, Växjö, is chairman, and Bishop Bo Giertz, Göteborg, is vice chairman. As executive secretary director Åke Kastlund, Stockholm, was chosen.

